**Unit One**

***Sacraments***

Sacraments offer us a way to experience the Risen Christ in a way that both makes sense to us and is authentic to the person and mission of Jesus Christ.

# What is a Sacrament?

Key Concept

Sacrament is the great paradigm of Catholicism. One could argue that if we don’t understand sacrament, we don’t understand Catholicism.

Key Terms

Paradigm Sacrament

Sign Institution

Grace

Outline

Sacrament and Paradigm

1. **Paradigm** refers to a basic framework for understanding what something is and how it works.
   1. This includes what we know or believe concerning the matter in question.
   2. It creates a guide for our decision-making.
   3. It offers insight into what we might expect.
2. **Sacrament** refers to an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.
   1. That statement explains how we are called into relationship with the Divine.
   2. To encounter Christ sacramentally is to seek a relationship with the divine in the way that God has asked us to encounter Him.
3. Sacrament refers specifically to the Seven Signed Sacraments—Baptism, Confirmation, Reconciliations, Anointing the Sick, Matrimony, and Holy Orders.
   1. These encounters are prescribed by Christ as the signs of our discipleship.
   2. To enter into the liturgies of these sacraments, is to seek the Divine.

Sacrament

1. Consider the meaning of the definition of sacrament.
2. Outward Sign
   1. **Signs** point to something beyond themselves by design. *traffic signs*
   2. The sign does this immediately without any intervening steps.
   3. Signs operating through sense knowing rather than through intellectual knowing *Change of the traffic light hit the brake*
   4. Like the traffic signal the sacrament is a sign that makes something happen.
3. Instituted
   1. An institution refers to a set of values considered too important to leave to the whim or will of any individual.
   2. Values are instituted so that the goods they embody are sustained.
   3. Instituted means that the sacraments exist in a particular way and that should be respected.
4. By Christ
   1. The source of our sacraments are the words and actions of Jesus.
   2. If we believe that Jesus is the Christ who has come to offer us salvation, then why wouldn’t we want a sacramental relationship with the Divine?
5. To Give Grace
   1. **Grace** is the divine presence in the human soul that blesses the person.
   2. Grace builds upon, elevates and transforms human nature.
   3. Graceanimates the Catholic keys to the mystical journey and offers the solution for sin.
   4. Grace is an invitation to love the Father as Jesus does with our whole heart, mind, soul, and self, and others as Jesus loves them. We are invited to be part of the solution.

Sacramental

1. **Sacramentals** (1668) are signs instituted by the Church to offer sanctification in preparation for the sacraments that they resemble.
2. Sacramentals refer to the blessing of persons, places, or objects that indicates they have or serve spiritually as well as physically.
   1. For well-disposed Catholic, the liturgy of the sacraments and sacramentals sanctifies almost every event of their lives with the divine grace which flows from the Paschal mystery of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ.
   2. From this source all sacraments and sacramentals draw their power. There is scarcely any proper use of material things which cannot be thus directed toward the sanctification of men and the praise of God.
3. We can be “sacramental” for each other.

Review

1. What is a paradigm?
2. What is a sacrament?
3. What are the names of the seven sacraments?
4. What is Grace?

Exercise

Compare and contrast Sacraments with non-sacramental ways of encountering the God.

**1.2 Modes of Reasoning**

Key Concept

The Formation of conscience can be done both rationally and mystically. Each of these modes makes a unique contribution to the process.

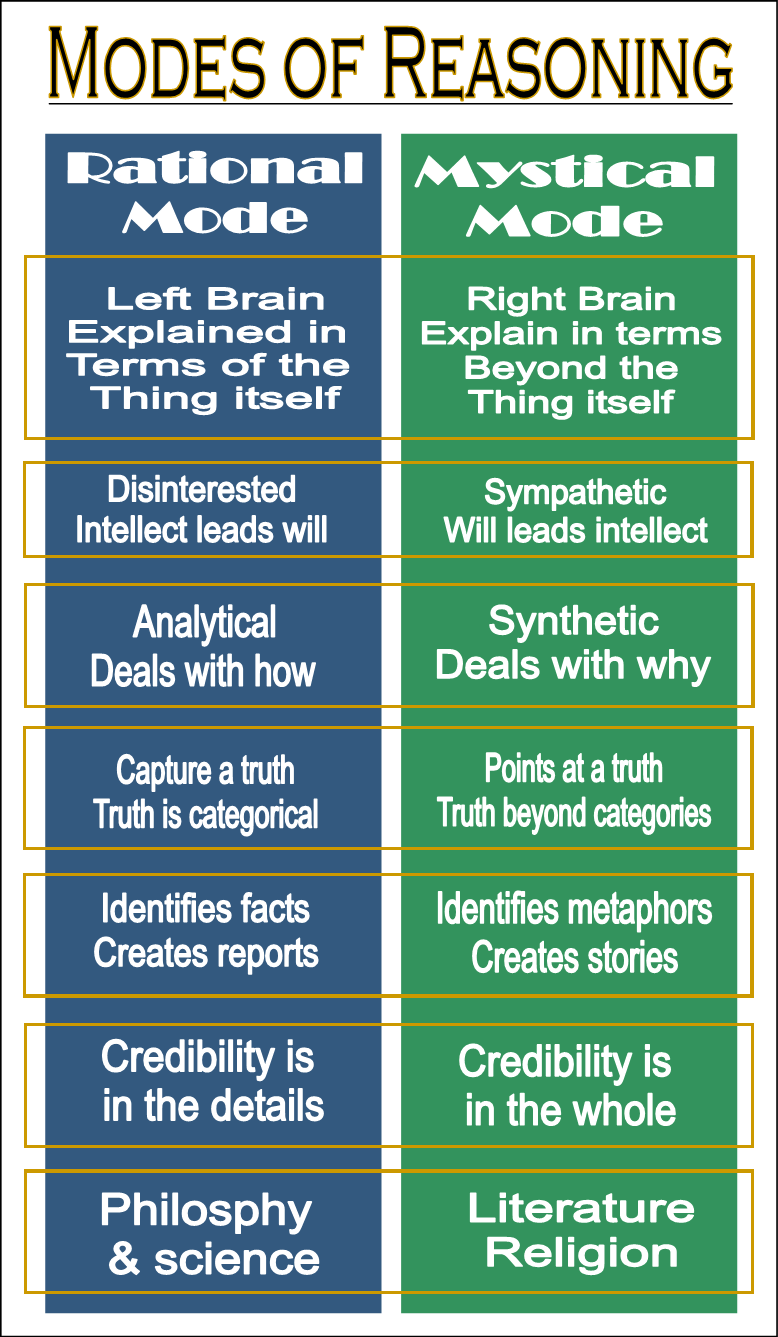
Key Terms

Rational Mode Mystical Mode

Preambles of Faith Scientific Method

Outline

1. The reasoning can be done both rationally and mystically.
2. **Rational Mode** reasoning seeks to discover meaning in terms of the thing itself.
   1. Left brain centered.
   2. Reasoning is disinterested meaning that it requires no empathy to understand the meaning.
   3. Reasoning is division—thinking in terms of the parts and dealing with how.
   4. Rational mode can capture a categorical truth called a fact and with this are created reports.
   5. The credibility of the report lies in its details. Philosophy and Science are examples.
3. **Mystical Mode** reasoning seeks to discover meaning in terms of something apart from the thing itself.
   1. Right brain centered.
   2. Reasoning is empathetic meaning that it requires a sense of connection to understand the meaning.
   3. Reasoning is composition—thinking in terms of the big picture and dealing with why.
   4. Mystical mode can point at a non- categorical truth called a metaphor and with this are created stories.
   5. The credibility of the story lies in the whole. Religion and Literature are examples.

****

Modes of Truth

1. Mystical truth differs from rational truth.
2. Because facts capture a truth, the rational truth is categorical.
   1. A statement that is categorically true creates a statement that is categorically false. *If the statement, “Maynard is human,” is true then it implies the statement, “Maynard is divine” is false.*
   2. A categorical statement always has the opposite truth-value of its contradiction.
3. Because metaphor points at a truth, a mystical truth is not categorical
   1. A statement that is non- categorically true does not create a statement that is categorically false. The statement, “*Jesus is truly human, is true, does not imply that the statement, “Jesus is truly divine,” is false.*
   2. A non-categorical statement does not imply the truth-value of its contradict
4. Each of the modes can be used in the formation of conscience.
   1. Each of the modes of reasoning corresponds to one of the hemispheres of the brain.
   2. Each seeks and can present the truth, but the characteristics of the modes are not the same and not interchangeable.



The Perils of the Modes

1. Throughout the history of the West, the relationship of the modes has been contentious.
   1. The Greek philosopher Xenophanes said the rainbow was a natural phenomenon, not a manifestation of the goddess Iris.
   2. Some medieval Christians believed the rose pedal was red so as to remind us of the blood of Christ.
   3. Scientific Creationism advances a view of science that is consistent with their understanding of the creation story in Genesis.
2. *The Relationship of the rational and mystical.*
   1. *St Thomas called what the rational mode discovers the* ***Preambles of Faith****—certain fundamental truths about the natural order leading to recognition of God’s existence and attributes.* 
      1. *They help us to understand the reasonableness of the faith.*
      2. *This is the work of philosophy.*
   2. *The mystical mode permits the acceptance of revealed truths that unaided reason could not discover.* 
      1. *These revealed truths then challenge reason to understand.*
      2. *This is the work of theology*
3. The Rational and the Mystical can be integrated based on two possible strategies.
   1. Mosaic Model properly blends the rational and the mystical in accord with their properties to attain an integrated cosmology.
   2. Mingle Model improperly blends the rational and mystical resulting in the loss of some properties to attain an integrated cosmology.



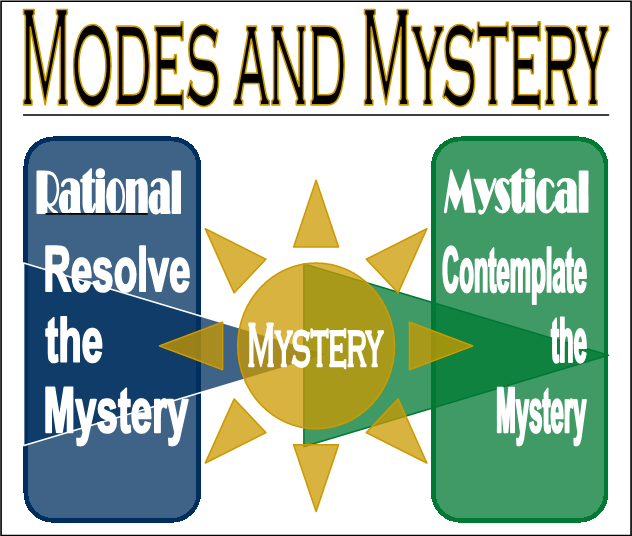
1. *There is no conflict between rational truth and mystical truth.* 
   1. *The appearance of conflict occurs because our knowledge is incomplete.*
   2. *The impact of the alleged conflict can be magnified if the rational and mystical are mingled.*

Scientific Method

1. Because the rational mode presently dominates and science is the most well-known way to think rationally, science can be made into the measure of all truth. *Science can’t prove that God exists so I’m an atheist.*
2. **Scientific Method** refers to a rational means to investigate repeatable material occurrences.
   1. Typically, this involves using of technology. *Telescope*
   2. In practice scientific method is oft over extended and applied to things outside of its scope. *Detecting ghosts with video cameras.*
3. Scope and limits of science
   1. Scientists look for direct evidence (evidence of causes) that can be repeatedly observed and measured. *Rain comes from water that has condensed in clouds high up in the atmosphere.*
   2. Science cannot investigate nor does it allege divine or paranormal cause. *The rain that ended the draught was a miracle. (It may have been a miracle, but science is unequipped to prove or disprove that claim.)*
   3. Scientific hypothesizes include the testable conditions that would make the statement false. *There is zero percent chance of rain today.*
   4. Scientist try to prove statements false because failing to do so produces less biased results. *Put out the rain gauge*
   5. Scientific hypothesizes try to explain how something works and not why. *How is it that we had a drought? Why does God punish people with a draught?*
   6. Scientific hypothesizes try to predict future occurrences. *Tomorrows forecast*
   7. Science prefers the simple explanation over the more complex explanation. *Cold air condenses water vapor in the atmosphere and rain follows.*
4. Realities that transcend the material are beyond the scope of science. *There is no blood test that can prove if you actually love someone.*

Why We Need the Mystical Mode

1. Christianity is a religion of mysteries. *Trinity, Incarnation, Paschal Mystery*
   1. The way we approach mystery sets the stage for how we engage the Divine.
   2. Mysteries focus on a paradox. *How could he have been seen at the movie when he was across town at work? How can God be both one and three?*
2. A common pitfall in the way we approach mystery is to employ the rational rather than the mystical mode.
   1. The rational mode tries to pierce the mystery in order to resolve it. *He has a twin brother.*
   2. The mystical mode tries to contemplate the mystery in order to experience it. *Be present to the mystery*



1. We need the mystical mode in order to understand the bigger picture—the reality that transcends categories.

*Dr. Nebula’s Challenge*

*World-renowned astronomer Dr. Nebula* *challenges the Catholic Church to a test. He wants to run a battery of scientific tests comparing a consecrated and an unconsecrated host. Dr. Nebula says there will be no difference.*

1. Dr. Nebula is correct there is no physical difference between the consecrated and unconsecrated hosts—the accidents are the same and science studies accidents.
   1. Consecration transforms the substance of bread to the substance of the Risen Christ.
   2. Because this occurs without altering the traits (accidents) of the host, it occurs beyond the realm of the rational.
   3. Only the mystical mode can connect us to those transcendent realities that offer us the meaning that we seek in pursuit of happiness.
   4. This connections will not pierce the mystery so that we can resolve it.
   5. This connection will contemplate the mystery so that we might experience it.

*Guru Bob’s Vision*

*Guru Bob claims that his church—The Holy Assembly of the Temporal Portal has a time camera that see back to the crucifixion of Jesus and proves that He died for our sins.*

1. Guru Bob is incorrect. Even if we could see back in time to view the actual crucifixion of Jesus, it would neither prove nor disprove the meaning of His death.
   1. Evidence of this type would offer insight into what happened and how it happened.
   2. The meaning of Jesus death—why it happened is a matter of faith.
   3. Only the mystical mode can connect us to those transcendent realities that offer us the meaning that we seek in pursuit of happiness.
   4. This connections will not pierce the mystery so that we can resolve it.
   5. This connection will contemplate the mystery so that we might experience it.

Sacraments Are Mystical

1. The goal of properly understanding the sacraments is largely a pursuit to be undertaken in the mystical mode.
2. There are no scientific experiments that can prove or disprove the reality of transubstantiation, for example.
   1. This is because science is limited to only those material occurrences that are repeatedly observable.
   2. Things that are not material, repeatable, and observable are by definition beyond the scope of science.

Exercise

Find an example of a mystical truth.

Review

1. How would you compare and contrast the mystical with the rational?
2. What are the perils of the modes and how can they be avoided?
3. Why is the statement God exists not a scientific statement?
4. Why does a proper understanding of the sacraments require a mystical approach?

**1.3 Metaphysically Thinking**

Key Concept

**Metaphysics** is the study of being. It explores the mystery of existence itself. It provides a way of thinking about reality.

Key Terms

Metaphysics Accidents

Act Nature

Potency Existence

Form Essence

Matter Final End

Substance Change

Supporting Terms

Lumen Purpose

Veneer Transcendentals

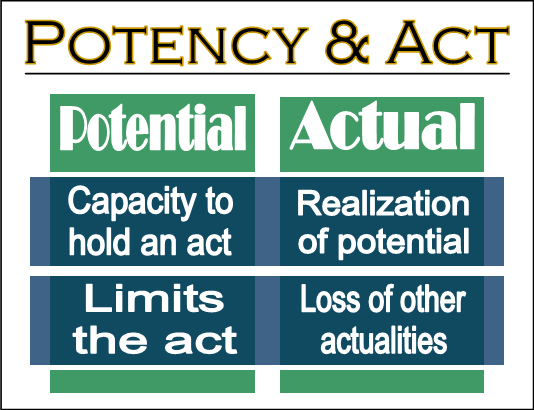
Outline

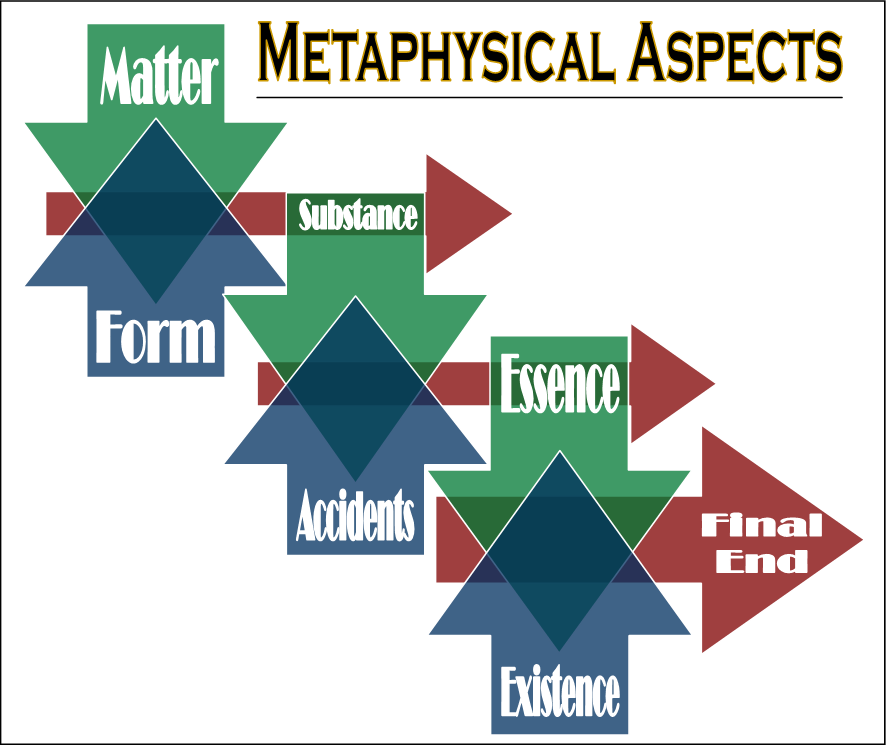
Change

1. **Change** refers to the process of becoming. *(acorn)*
2. Principles of changes
   1. Subject principle is the matter in which the change occurs.
   2. Form principle refers to what is actualized at the end of the change. *(Milk)*
   3. Privation principle refers to what is lost because a form was actualized.
3. Degree of change
   1. **Identity** refers to the subsisting reality that distinguishes something from all else.
   2. Substantial change refers to a change in substance resulting in a change in identity. *(Match)*
   3. Accidental (incidental) change results in a change in condition while identity is maintained. (*Hair color*)

Considering Potency and Act

1. **Potency** refers to what could be the reality. *(Jar lid, cup of coffee)*
   1. Capacity to hold an act (form principle)
   2. Limits the act (privation principle)
2. **Act** what is reality
   1. Realization of some potential (form principle)
   2. Loss of some other act (privation principle) *(airplane)*





Metaphysical Aspects

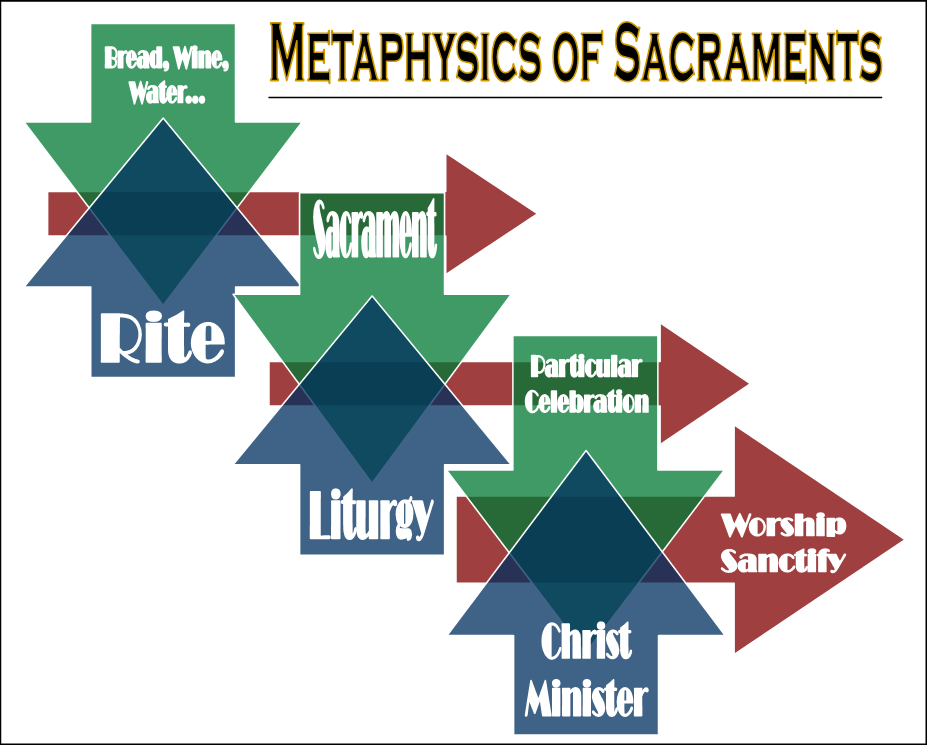
1. Potentials (Top Tier)
   1. **Matter** refers to the material stuff of which a thing or act consists. Potential actualized in form.
   2. **Substance** refers to the particular identity of a thing or an act with all of its properties. It’s its *isness* in a universal sense. Potential actualized in accidents.
   3. **Essence** refers to the particular identity of a thing or an act with all of its properties in a certain condition. It’s its *isness* in a particular sense. Potential actualized in existence.
   4. **Nature** is a synonym for essence.
2. Actuals (Bottom Tier)
   1. **Form** gives identity and makes something a certain kind of thing. Form actualizes matter leading to substance.
   2. **Accidents** are traits that cannot exist apart from a substance and are not properties of a substance
   3. **Existence** means to possess being. Existence actualizes essence.
   4. **Final End** is what the act is ordered toward.
   5. **Purpose** is a synonym for final end.

Metaphysical Being

1. Being
   1. The first thing grasped by our senses.
   2. It has the widest extension and offers the least comprehension because it offers no distinguishing details about everything.
2. **Transcendentals** refer to the properties possessed by all things that exist simply because they do exist.
   1. *Unity* refers to the oneness of a thing or act that isolates it from everything else.
   2. *Goodness* refers to its capacity to actualize.
   3. *Truth* states what actually the case is. Beings reveal something of what it means to exist.
   4. *Beauty* refers to the harmony, clarity, and vividness of a thing or act that evokes delight in another.

Metaphysics of Sacraments

1. The metaphysics of sacraments offer a view of the big picture.
   1. Rite (Form) is the traditional form and manner of a religious observance.
      1. Form and matter are governed by a tradition under the leadership of a patriarch.
      2. Some aspects of the rite are immutable because they are part of the apostolic tradition. *Bread and wine are the elements of Eucharist.*
      3. Other aspects of the rite are changeable. *Trent was superseded by Vatican II.*
   2. Bread, wine, water and other materials (matter) are the stuff used in the celebration of sacraments.
   3. Sacrament (substance) refers to the particular identity of the act with all of its properties. It’s its *isness* in a universal sense.
   4. Liturgy (accidents) actualizes the sacrament creating a particular celebration.
   5. The particular celebration (essence) refers to the particular identity of a thing or an act with all of its properties in this time and place. It’s its *isness* in a particular sense.
   6. Christ and His minister (existence) actualizes the particular celebration creating grace-filled worship that sanctifies the participants.



Exercise

Chart the metaphysical aspects of the Church.

Review

1. What is the relationship between potency and act?
2. What is the relationship between nature and purpose?
3. What does metaphysics have to do with the study of Church?

**1.4 The Human Rational Soul**

Key Concept

The **human rational soul** is the substantial form of the human individual. It means that we have the capacity to be spiritual. The Risen Christ can actualize us so that we become the light of Christ. (0366, 2516)

Key Terms

Appetite Higher Appetite

Lower Appetite Emotions

Human rational soul Skill Reasoning

Concupiscence Will

Intellect Panoramic Reasoning

Supporting Terms

Executive Will

Simple Will Impeded Will

DeliberationContemplation

Outline

Appetites

1. The **Appetites** (Flesh, Gut, Drives) (1763-1775) refers to the automatic and uncritical attraction to what appears good or repulsion from what appears evil. *(Horror movie)*
2. Appetites signal the need for a good
3. Aspects of the Appetites
   1. **Higher Appetites**: attraction to spiritual or formal goods (*holiness, justice, and friendship)*
   2. **Lower Appetites**: attraction to physical or material goods (*food, cars, and stuff).*
   3. **Emotions** The emotions are surges of energy through the appetites that can override the intellect and inflame the will. *Examples include anger or sexual desires*
4. **Will** (Heart) (1731-1738) refers to the ability to act on our own initiative: the freedom to choose. It is the capacity to form intention.
5. Aspects of the Will
   1. **Executive Will** refers to the choice we freely make that establishes the realm of our conduct called character.
      1. Character refers to who we are as a result of our free will acts.
      2. Personhood refers to who we are because of our traits or what has happened to us.
   2. **Simple Will** refers to acts we take within the confines of our character.
6. Freely responding to Grace means that our character fits the overlap of our human nature and our personhood.
   1. We will never be able to fully incorporate our personhood back into our human nature in this life. This fact is called concupiscence.
   2. **Concupiscence** refers to the struggle within the self, caused by the alienation of the original sin. It is the tendency to live out of our ego: selfishness.
   3. **Impeded Will** refers to act we take without consent due to forces beyond our control. Original sin has knocked our nature and our personhood out of sync with each other.

Intellect

1. **Intellect** (Mind) (1701-1715) refers to our capacity to know and understand.
2. The Intellect must be developed.
   1. The will and the appetites seem to be hard wired.
   2. Changes in the other faculties occur through the Intellect. (*Anger management)*
3. The Acts of the Intellect
   1. The First Act of the Intellect is the act of simple apprehension whereby we identify objects and define them. *Robin, Dog, Mammal*.
   2. The Second Act of the Intellect is act of composing and dividing leading to propositions. *All dogs are mammals. No robins are mammals.*
   3. The Third Act of the Intellect is reasoning, which is the process of sequencing propositions in order to draw out new truths. *No robins are mammals. All dogs are mammals. No dogs are robins*

Thinking & Reasoning

1. **Skill reasoning** refers to non-self-reflective thinking that can lead to the performance of actions. *The tree squirrel buried the nuts.*
2. **Panoramic reasoning** refers to the capacity to take the mental step back and understand the bigger picture.
   1. It allows us to conceive of the forest and not just make percepts of the trees.
   2. So far as we can tell, only human beings can reason panoramically.
   3. A panoramic intellect makes language possible.
3. Language is a system of communication using words that represent sensations, percepts or concepts expressed through signs or sounds.
   1. It allows us to conceive the abstract and so create categories that transcend the limits of the physical universe.
   2. We acquire language gradually in a social context.
   3. We internalize language thus allowing us to reason using concepts.
   4. We can also share those concepts though words.
4. The panoramic reasoning also makes it possible for humans to have a conscience.
   1. **Deliberation** refers to applying principles in order to make a decision.
   2. **Contemplation** refers to deep deliberation concerning the nature of things: human nature, and good and evil.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| BoeboeID | **Thee, me and not the animals** | **Thee, me, and the animals** |
| **Appetite** | Higher Appetites | Lower Appetites |
| **Intellect** | Self-reflective Panoramic Reasoning | Non self-reflective Skill  Thinking |
| **Will** | Executive Will | Simple Will |

Cosmic Antenna

1. All thinking or reasoning is a process of making comparisons.
   1. As we move from thinking to reasoning the kinds of comparisons made change.
   2. Language is a system of communication using metaphors expressed through signs or sounds.
      1. It allows us to conceive the abstract and so create categories that transcend the limits of the physical.
      2. Because of language we can have a spiritual encounter with the Word.
2. Those distinctively human qualities of a spiritual appetite, panoramic intellect, and executive will make it possible for us to engage the Divine.

Exercise

Explain why we, unlike other animals, are able to be spiritual.

Review

1. What does the term Appetite mean?
2. What does the term Will mean?
3. What does the term Intellect mean?
4. What are the attributes that give us the capacity to be spiritual?

**1.5 The Experience of Mystery**

Key Concept

The experience of the Divine is always an experience of mystery.

Terms

Realm Ambiance

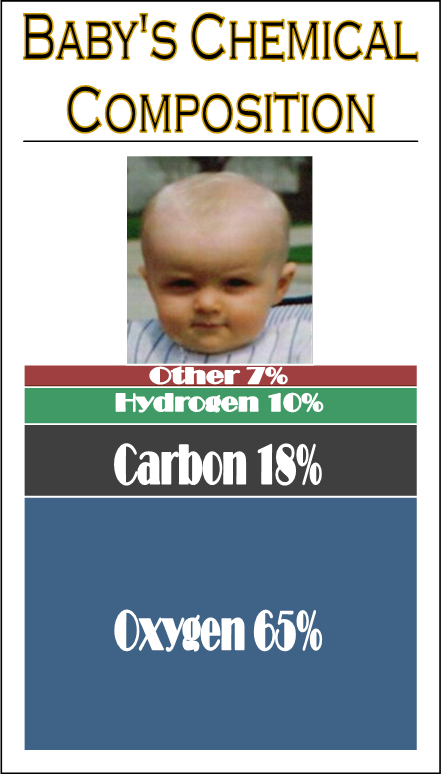
Mystery Vanishing Point

Vista Prompt

Outline

## Mystery

1. A **mystery** refers to anything that can be partially known while remaining partially unknown.
2. Mysteries occur because reality exists in layers.
   1. Layers can be easily reduced to their components. *The chemical elements that constitute a baby.*
   2. But components cannot be reconstituted into the greater reality. *Mix together the chemical elements that constitute a baby and it doesn’t become a baby.*



1. As we penetrate one layer of reality, the mystery of the next layer is revealed.
   1. No matter the reality in question, the mystery is never fully resolved.
   2. As the mystery is penetrated and concepts are made, the mystery shifts to another level. *Best Friend*

Chemical

Elements

in the

Human

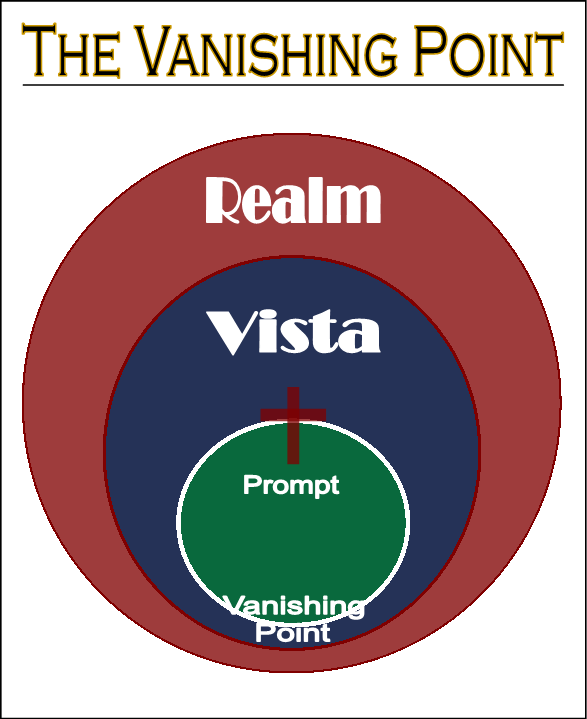
Baby

## The Vanishing Point

1. To live fully, we must learn to navigate in a reality steeped in mystery.
2. Our experience teaches us that we understand reality in a limited fashion.
   1. We will have a notion concerning a person, place or thing that changes because we know more than we did before.
   2. We have moved the Vanishing Point further into the Vista.
3. Life is more than meets the eye. We desire to move the Vanishing Point because we desire to see and know what we don’t see and know.
   1. The person in love is not satisfied with knowing a little of the beloved.
   2. The new parent wants to know more of the child.
   3. Imagine that you know nothing of the game of baseball. These categories can prompt us to seek the deeper mystery to which they point.
      1. A bat, ball, and glove point to the mystery that is baseball.
      2. At first, the bat, ball, and glove are vanishing points because we see them as pointing toward something that is a mystery to us.
      3. Playing baseball would give us a notion concerning the bat, ball, and glove, so they are no longer vanishing points.
      4. Playing baseball would reveal other prompts like the relationship of hits and runs.
   4. As our vanishing point recedes, our notion of baseball increases and we see more of the vista that is baseball.
   5. The Vista that is baseball may never be fully revealed even to the most experienced enthusiast.

## Vocabulary of Mystery

1. **Realm** refers to the totality of a thing or act. It is all that it is.
   1. We can never know all there is of a reality.
   2. **Vista** refers to the part of the realm that we can potentially know. It’s all that is knowable.
   3. We only know a small portion of a thing or act, but that portion grows as we learn and experience more of it.
2. **Vanishing Point** refers the boundary between what is presently known and what could possibly be known (vista).
   1. **Prompt** refers to something that cues us to what lies beyond the vanishing point.
   2. **Ambiance** refers to the atmosphere and related symbols and practice that make a particular mood.



## The Mystery of God

1. God is mystery meaning that God can be partially known while remaining partially unknown.
   1. Faith offers us a way to see reality so that we are ever conscious of the fact that just as life is more than meets the eye, so too God is more than meets the eye.
   2. Faith opens us to the prompts that permit us to navigate the mystery of God.
   3. The prompts (Cross, Rosary, Statues, etc.) create the ambiance of spirituality that promotes a deeper relationship with God.
2. Revelation is the way that God invites us to enter into the Divine Mystery. Jesus Christ bridges the vanishing point. We bridge the vanishing point by entering into the Mystery of Christ.

Exercise

Read 0519-0521

Write a paragraph explaining our communion in the mysteries of Jesus.

Review

1. Why is the vanishing point always receding?
2. Why is human life always an experience of mystery?
3. What the indicators that there is something beyond the vanishing point?